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The film ends as Amelie experiences a moment of happiness she has found for herself --Wikipedia

MAIL BLOG C.C.

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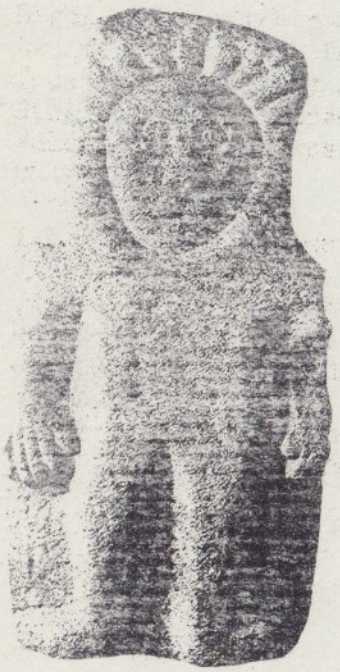

Eight forty five p m or twenty forty five, Paris Theater (now run by a leading streaming company), Valentine's Day,,seat GG111.

I have a view of the whole audience from this seat. I can see everyone's head like the world turned its back on me. The opposite of Amelie's simple pleasure of sitting up front to watch the faces behind her.

Warning: spoilers.

We're all here to watch her do that and by the level of laughter, deligh t, frustration, and shock --the "jesus" I heard two rows down when the touris t plunged to her death, landing on Amelie's mothe r--many are seeing The Fabulous Destiny of Amelie Poulain for the first tim e.

In late October, I rewatch ed Amelie after a two deca de gap. I was in an increa singly fragile state of mind that was only to get worse, and for an entire weekend, Amelie was the only anchor that tethered me to a reality that felt more stable than the one I was trying to escape.

When the final credits end ed, I pressed play again. And again. By the third play, I decided to watch as many times as I could in a row. Six. I could have kept going had the weekend continued, but I had to re-enter my trouble d reality early Monday morning.

Being in this theater alone on Valentine's Day feels like an extension of that experiment. My mind is still fragile, but now a support team of profess ionals and resources is assigned to rebuild its foundations: therapist, psychiatrist, two doctors, acupuncturist, personal trainer, restorative yogi, meditation, self-help lit erature, and my closest friends.

I write "times are hard for dreamers" into my notebook after Nino's porn store co-worker says it to Amelie. She asked if he had a girlfriend. The coworker listed things Nino spent his attention on: collecting footprints, laughs, and abandoned passport photos.

I ran into my friend who studi es astrology when I entered th e theater lobby. As a birthday gift last year, he conducted a reading of my chart. His advic e then was to take a closer look at the stuff in me that I'm afraid to know so I can learn how to contain it.

The advice echoed that of an Eastern European coven I once paid for a long-distance psych ic reading. "For your path to be fruitful, it must have a very concrete goal, direction, and purpose. Seek first to fil l your soul with true under-standing, then your creations will sing the song of the universe." Know yourself to contain yourself.

Michel de Montaigne wrote that "when the soul has no definite goal, it gets lost ... chronic dissatisfaction further drives this restlessness." He was a significant philosopher during the French Renaissance respons ible for merging biographical anecdotes with intellectual insights to elevate the essay into a literary genre.

The moment that Amelie defined her goal after successfully returning a forty year old tim e capsule to a grown up boy, she walked through the sun and birdsong, buzzing with a conce ntrated imaginative awareness of her experience. True happin ess. I recognize those flee ting moments as poetry reve aling itself through the chaos. The essence of inner feelings and thoughts that are relating to the externa l world. The poet Elizabeth Bishop described these reve lations as "unexpected mome nts of empathy" towards som ething "that seems enormous ly important."

Empathy is an instinct, lik e attention, that we often suppress because too much of it is overwhelming. Amelie's happiness was temporary. All of her atten tion was used to rid a stra nger of this assumed dissat isfaction that she had none left to pay her own. To tend to both requires an amount of attention we're incapable of sustaining.

Feelings are ignored and overlooked as potential evidence-based resources, but since they are a part of the human experience, it seems possible that they are essential tools in both the construction of our world and our understanding of it. Using that tool to access potential alternativ es might help us fix what's not working.

Agnes Martin practiced med itation for twenty minutes twice a day for decades unt il, at the age of eighty fi ve, she said she no longer needed meditation to empty her mind, "You don't have to worry / if you can imag ine that you're a rock / all your troubles fall away" she wrote in a piece title d "The Untroubled Mind." Amelie turns to the rock-- collecting them in her poc kets, skipping them on wat er. I turn to rocks too, keeping them in my pockets to grip a piece of the Ear th for courage.

At the peak of the film's arc, the two sides of love come face to face, the enti re theater, five hundred se sentient and independent be ings who waited for this meeting for over an hour, and all their lives, was completely silent. No coug h, no sniff, no sigh.